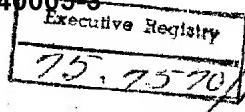


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13 August 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director

SUBJECT : Strategic Warning Staff Alert List

1. In response to your expressed interest in the Strategic Warning Staff Alert List, and how it is being used, the National Intelligence Officers concerned have reviewed the questions posed in the 17 July Alert List.

2. Their general comments may be summarized as follows:

- Several acknowledged that they had no current appreciation of Intelligence Community reactions to the Alert List and, thus, drew on experiences in their previous assignments for their comments. It was noted that in the past the Community and the unified commands responded promptly to similar issuances from the Watch Committee.
- There was a feeling that the Alert List has potentially more utility to field commands and collectors than to Washington analysts, since the latter should be able to determine for themselves what are the key questions.
- There are doubts that the Alert List is regarded as an action document for the Intelligence Community. Special collection actions would normally be proposed by current intelligence analysts (or by indications and warning centers) directly to collecting agencies as developments dictate. This means they would rarely result from circulation of an Alert List.

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Following Communist military activity is a highest priority task of the entire intelligence apparatus. The subjects in the Alert List are usually not unique, and in most cases are being followed in some detail by current intelligence elements of several agencies.

3. The following comments deal more specifically (and to some extent more critically) with the questions contained in the 17 July Alert List:

- The Soviet/EE questions which relate to Warsaw Pact exercise activity and TU-95 reconnaissance, are standard and would be answered regardless of whether they appeared in an Alert List.
- Some of the questions themselves seem beyond the charter of an Alert List, or are out of focus.
- The question of OKEAN-75 is beyond current intelligence. Evaluations of such a large-scale exercise cannot be usefully made in the near term, and interim replies stimulated by this question could be pernicious if mistakenly regarded as conclusive.
- The question concerning Soviet advance notice of Arab or Israeli intentions to renew hostilities would be more relevant if directed to our perceiving Soviet reactions than to whether the Soviets get warning -- since the Soviets have the same problems as we do in obtaining such warning.
- The question on Korea exhorts analysts and collectors to be alert to possible aggressive action from the North. What they should be told to look for are the indicators and questions which might be tip-offs to such action.

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4. I have no specific recommendations at this time. The National Intelligence Officers will, however, give continuing attention to the Alert List, and may produce further evaluations, as well as some recommendations, in the future.

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[Redacted]
George A. Carver, Jr.
Deputy for National Intelligence Officers

cc: DDCI
D/DCI/IC
DDI
Executive Registry